



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

BULLETIN NO. 78-

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TO THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS

SUBJECT: Dissemination of Technical Information

1. Background. Each year Federal agencies spend a significant amount of resources to support and undertake research and development programs. Through its involvement in these activities, the Federal government acquires a large volume of technical information, much of which could be used to support activities in the public and private sectors beyond the immediate mission of the sponsoring Federal agency. Currently, no single organization is responsible for coordinating the dissemination of technical information published by or for the Federal government. As a result, individuals and organizations who are interested in finding out what technical information is available from the Federal government must contact a number of different sources.

Many Federal agencies utilize the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) of the Department of Commerce, which is a clearinghouse for the collection and dissemination of scientific, technical and engineering information (see 15 U.S.C. 1151-1157). Pursuant to this statute, NTIS has an ongoing program to make copies of reports available to the public, publish indexes and announcements on available reports and maintain a publicly accessible computerized bibliographic file covering reports and other documents prepared or sponsored by many different Federal departments and agencies. NTIS has cooperative agreements with hundreds of government organizations to make their technical information available to the public and normally does so at little or no cost to the contributing agency. Income from the sale of technical information products and services is used to support the NTIS operation.

2. Purpose. The purpose of this Bulletin is to establish Federal policies for disseminating technical information which results from federally funded research and development

Not referred to OMB. Waiver
applies.

activities and to prescribe executive department and agency responsibilities for disseminating such information.

3. Scope. The policies and responsibilities established by this bulletin apply to all technical information which results from federally funded research and development activities and which would be required to be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552). The policies and responsibilities established by this bulletin are applicable to all technical information, as defined in paragraph 4.

4. Definition. For the purposes of this bulletin, "technical information" is defined as all technical, scientific, business and industrial information which results from Federally funded research and development activities sponsored or supported by an executive department, agency or establishment; which may be of some direct or indirect benefit to the private sector and which is subject to public disclosure in accordance with paragraph 3 of this bulletin. Typically, such information will be in the form of interim or final reports.

This definition does not include administrative and budgetary information; legal briefs, correspondence; public notices; internal agency operating procedures; agency memoranda or records; patents and trademarks; nautical/aeronautical charts; and similar information.

5. Policy. It is the policy of the United States Government that all technical information which results from federally funded research and development shall be made publicly available, consistent with the need to protect individual privacy, national security and proprietary interests. More specifically the following policies are hereby established:

- o Each department and agency shall determine the appropriate method for disseminating the technical reports and studies it prepares or sponsors.
- o The National Technical Information Service, Department of Commerce, shall maintain a file of all federally funded technical information which is available from executive departments and agencies or other sources.
- o All technical information which is made available by the Federal government shall be priced to recover the full costs of printing, publicizing and disseminating

such information, unless otherwise required by statute or demonstrated not to be in the national interest.

- o Consistent with the provisions of OMB Circular No. A-76, the Federal government shall rely upon the private enterprise system to publish and disseminate technical information, except where it is in the national interest to do otherwise.

6. Agency Responsibilities. Each executive department and agency shall take appropriate steps to ensure that technical information which results from research and development activities it undertakes or sponsors is made available to business and industry, other agencies of the Federal government, state and local government, universities and research centers, and the general public. In carrying out this responsibility, agencies are encouraged to use the facilities of the National Technical Information Service (NTIS) of the Department of Commerce for the purpose of printing, publicizing and disseminating technical reports. Each department and agency shall:

- a. Select that method of disseminating technical information which is in the best interest of both the agency and the Federal government. Decisions regarding the appropriate method shall, unless otherwise required by law, be made on the basis of mission need, cost and Federal policy.

- b. Evaluate its existing methods of disseminating technical information to assure that they are in the best interests of the agency and the government. The criteria to be used for such evaluations shall be the same as that identified in 6(a) above.

- c. Submit a bibliographic description of each technical report it prepares or sponsors to the NTIS and identify where and how each report can be obtained.

- d. Issue such regulations and procedures as are necessary to carry out these responsibilities.

7. National Technical Information Service Responsibilities. The NTIS of the Department of Commerce shall:

- a. Maintain and make public an index of all technical reports available from the Federal government. This index

should, at a minimum, briefly describe the contents of each report and identify where and how it can be obtained.

b. Publish and make available to the public each technical report which it receives from Federal departments and agencies.

c. Make technical reports available on a full cost recovery basis.

d. Annually publish in the Federal Register the cost allocation formula used to set prices on documents available through the NTIS.

e. Issue such guidance as is necessary to carry out these responsibilities.

f. Comply with the printing and binding regulations of the Joint Committee on Printing, U.S. Congress.

8. Effective Date. The requirements set forth in this bulletin are effective 90 days from the date issued.

9. Further Information. For further information on the policies and responsibilities outlined in this Bulletin, please contact the Information Systems Policy Division, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, D.C. 20503 (202) 395-3785.

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